

EARLY HEAD START TIP SHEET

No. 1

How do we go about screening premature infants when there is no developmental screening tool that allows for a negative age?

Response:

Screening a premature baby requires that the child's age is corrected to the gestational age. If the child is too young for the developmental scale, one of two paths are followed:

- 1) Wait until the child is old enough and document why the screening is late.
- 2) Administer a screening that is appropriate for, or as close as possible, to the child's physical age. If the child does not pass the screening, designate for a rescreening. Unless there is a clinical reason to do otherwise, wait 6 to 8 weeks to rescreen the child with the same tool.

If the child has had a developmental screening conducted by personnel experienced in the development of premature infants, the program should obtain copies of these documents.

Considerations:

- There are "findings" SO BIG that even age adjustments make a referral not only necessary but also urgent.

Performance Standards, Title 45, Code of Federal Regulations:

- **1304.20(b)** Screening for developmental, sensory, and behavioral concerns. (1) In collaboration with each child's parent, and within 45 calendar days of the entry into the program, grantee and delegate agencies must perform or obtain linguistically and age appropriate screening procedures to identify concerns regarding a child's developmental, sensory (visual and auditory), behavioral, motor, social, cognitive, perceptual, and emotional skills.

Resources:

Developmental Screening, Assessment, and Evaluation: Key Elements for Individualizing Curricula in Early Head Start Programs

<http://www.ehsnrc.org/pdf/files/FinalTAP.pdf>

(2001) *Developmental Surveillance and Screening of Infants and Young Children.*

American Academy of Pediatrics, Vol. 108, No. 1, pp 192-196. Accessible via

<http://www.aap.org/policy/re0062.html>

Local EHS/Head Start Health Services Advisory Committees

Local Part C Agency, coordinating early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities

Local Medical Community

03/03

The Tip Sheet is not a regulatory document. Its intent is to provide a basis for dialogue, clarification, and problem solving among the Head Start Bureau, Regional Offices, T & TA consultants, and grantees.